

Shelvedon 25. 11. 79

My dear Joseph

Thou wilt I expect think it rather strange that I should send the message I did to thee last post, the fact of the matter is that while writing a few lines to S. B. a conversation was going on respecting dear E. D.'s illness, when I said I think we should invite her here, when all unananimously agreed, and that I much do so at once. I said me, I will write to Joseph myself next post but, no go I much do so then hence the hurried invitation, I now can only say ^{that} it seems right to thee and dear Esther, we shall all be very glad to have her amongst us, and will do all we can for her, and her companion, I should very much ^{like} to see dear Anna if she will come and see me once more.

I have long been wishing to write to thee dear Joseph yet altho' there seems to be a great deal on my mind, words will not come to my aid I feel to think I feel full often that thou art deep into sympathy with me though dost not say so to me but amidst all my tribulations from within and

I can thankfully acknowledge
and without "that goodness and mercy" have
followed me all the days of my life" and I am
sometimes cheered by the remembrance of
if the gracious living assurance given me in
very early womanhood in a time of deep
trial, even "that I will never leave thee or
forsake thee," I would tell thee all about it
if I had the chance but the time may never
come here. Hereafter we shall all know
each other but I am rambling on the border-
land ^{in the wings of a dove} for Father is very much perplexed
about this sheep affair and all of us with
him. I think it would have been far bet-
ter for the sake of peace if ^{he} had submitted
to the "extortion" rather than ^{have} this perplex-
ity - such a noise as there was here last
night a perfect "Babel": if I was here about
this affair and they were all talking the same
thing over and over again for hours, how glad I shall
be when we can settle down into the quiet
once more. I feel rather doubtful whether
William's proposed arrangement will
be for the best. Dr. is dubious upon the subject
but we must, and I trust we do look for each
help in the matter. we old folks are on the
border land and require quiet and we

Henry is here again, he was here last night
but went no further than Swansea they are all
proud and a word for dear, and truly so I am
I hope Father will not break down to morrow at
the office I know he feels this affair more than he
appears to, I think James White is a very wicked
man, and a dangerous enemy. I am getting plenty
of work just now in the District tho' not very able
to do it I think they will finish him if soon
poor F. Steggs is a great deal altered poor girl,
she had to go through a sad ordeal indeed
almost to the death, her fine little baby had to
be taken away with instruments, I was with her
most of the time her poor mother could not bear
to witness her agony and came in here about 4
nine o'clock begging to be allowed to stay in the
Kitchen so I went in her stead tho' I am able to
do so how could I do otherwise? she was not relieved
until four in the morning her labour having com-
menced at the same hour the day before - I was pretty
well exhausted by that time myself, but poor Robert
was so grateful that it made up for all the fatigue
Oh dear excuse this rambling letter I am almost
ashamed to send it, but what thou not the kind
and loving Husband of my beautiful child? farewell
with kindest love to all

Thy loving Mother
Ann M. Cotton

fourth day morning

poor Father is off to the Police office he feels
at very much his spirits are no longer buoyant
but I trust he will be helped it is a sad trial
to us both though some might be disposed to smile
he has passed through some very restless nights
on which I have fully shared and feel very poorly
this morning but I must bear up for a very little
upsets me now and increases the pain in my
side and other ailments Dr. Has Henry and E
are with him I intended to be so likewise but was
obliged to go a few miles beyond Lynes professionally
the old Lady is much worse shockiness of breath
I hope I will be in time of her and as near as
I know it will be a comfort to her to have been with
her he is still able to knock about this way now poor
man but there is rest in store for him and us I trust
beneath the midst of a great muddle Joseph is painting
my the long room for me we require ceiling paper
for it, will thou please send a foot bath and some
stockings for father also 3 pairs of girls white cotton ones
not to five, Eliza is a stout girl, these ought to have been
sent for with ^{the} we also require a scrubbing
brush and broom head Father is home and
is writing thee and I will again say farewell
and with dear love I am
Thy loving Mother L. M. C.